
NEWS RELEASE

Judd Gregg

United States Senator for New Hampshire
393 Russell Building, Washington, D.C. 202-224-3324 www.senate.gov/~gregg/



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 4, 2003

Contact: Erin Rath (GREGG) (202) 224-3324
Barbara Riley (SUNUNU) (202) 224-2841

**SENATORS GREGG AND SUNUNU VOTE TO ELIMINATE BASE
REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE PROGRAM SCHEDULED FOR 2005**
Amendment to strip BRAC responsibility from Pentagon fails 42-53

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Senators Judd Gregg (R-NH) and John Sununu (R-NH) today voted in favor of a measure that would have prevented the Pentagon from carrying out its scheduled round of military base closures slated for 2005. The Base Realignment and Closure program is the initiative through which the Department of Defense closes military installations across the nation by deeming them surplus or excess. The amendment to the Fiscal Year 2004 Department of Defense Authorization bill failed by a vote of 42-53. The full Senate passed the overall authorization bill today as well.

Senator Gregg, a member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, stated, "If the Pentagon has surplus facilities, which I agree it likely does, then those specific excess military facilities should be targeted for possible closure. However, this BRAC process is too broad. It needlessly causes anxiety and fear and stunts economic growth in every community which is home to a military facility. I voted against the BRAC because this downsizing process can and should be accomplished in a more thoughtful way.

"Regardless of this unsuccessful effort, I believe that the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is an extremely strong position over the next several years. With the upcoming relocation of two Coast Guard cutters to the Shipyard, it continues to prove itself to be an invaluable asset to our nation's maritime security. The submarine overhaul work being done continues to be on-time and on-budget, the apprentice program is currently training the next generation of experts in submarine improvement and management, unions and employees are all working toward a common goal. I will continue to closely monitor any developments regarding the BRAC program to ensure that the interests of the Shipyard and its employees are protected."

"We don't have to look much further than the past six months to realize the importance of having our nation's military infrastructure at the ready," said Senator Sununu. "Now is not the right time or environment to begin another base closure round. There are other more targeted procedures that can be used to review the status of our defense resources."

"With regard to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, the facility has demonstrated time and again that it can be a cost-effective and competitive resource for the Navy with its expert work at refueling and overhauling Los Angeles Class nuclear submarines," stated Sununu.

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